

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A catheter for insertion into ~~the a~~ human body ~~and which includes~~ comprising one or more ~~optionally scanning~~ scanning-enabled ultrasonic transducers as well as a surgical instrument, wherein the surgical instrument is configured to be operated from the outside of the human body and comprises a needle configured for the introduction of a substance or for the extraction of tissue samples,

wherein the catheter comprises at least two inner parts having ~~of a~~ substantially ~~completely circular or partially~~ circular arc cross section sections, and wherein ~~where~~ a rod is inserted between said inner parts and ~~at~~ the end of the rod is provided with at least one ~~an~~ scanning-enabled ultrasonic transducer,

said ~~completely or partially circular~~ inner parts being ~~surrounded by~~ enclosed in an outer tube which passes passed over the ~~completely or partially~~ inner circular parts, and

~~where~~ wherein the outer surface of at least one of the ~~completely or partially circular~~ inner parts is provided

with a longitudinal groove configured to provide an opening
for ~~the~~ insertion of the ~~surgical instrument~~ needle,
wherein the ~~completely or partially circular~~ inner parts
removably engage each other and are bound ~~kept together~~ by
said other tube when the catheter is assembled,
wherein the ~~partially circular~~ inner parts have abutting
surfaces shaped so that they can be locked relative to one
another, forming a longitudinal seam between the inner
parts,

the ~~completely or partially circular~~ inner parts capable
of being removed from the outer tube and disengaged
from each other ~~for sterilization/disinfecting~~
~~purposes~~,
wherein the ~~surgical instrument is formed by a needle for the~~
~~introduction of a substance or for the extraction of tissue~~
~~samples~~, and

wherein the longitudinal groove ~~in the surface of one of the~~
~~completely or partially circular parts~~ is shaped such that
the ~~needle extends immediately below and parallel to the~~
~~outer tube~~, and the longitudinal groove extends at least
long enough along the length of the ~~completely or partially~~
~~circular part~~ so that ~~during use~~, a first end of the
longitudinal groove is outside the human body and a second
end of the longitudinal groove is inside the human body so

~~that the surgical instrument~~ can be inserted from the outside of the human body into the human body via the longitudinal groove.

Claims 2-4 previously canceled.

5. (currently amended) A catheter according to claim 1, wherein ~~the a bottom surface of the groove in the surface of one of the completely or partially circular parts ends in~~ gradually slopes toward the outer surface of the circular inner part immediately below the outer tube at an end of said inner part intended for insertion into the human body.

6. (previously canceled).

7. (currently amended) A catheter according to claim 1, wherein the rod with the ultrasonic transducer can be rotated relative to the ~~completely or partially circular part(s)~~ inner parts.

8. (previously canceled).

9. (currently amended) A catheter for insertion into the human body ~~and which includes~~ comprising one or more ~~optionally scanning~~ scanning-enabled ultrasonic transducers as well as a

surgical instrument to be operated from outside the human body,
said catheter comprising:

a pair of substantially ~~completely circular or partially circular cross sectional~~ hemicylindrical shell parts, the ~~substantially circular or partially circular cross sectional~~ hemicylindrical shell parts removably engaging ~~engageable with~~ each other;

a rod inserted between said ~~substantially completely circular or partially circular cross sectional~~ hemicylindrical shell parts, an end of the rod provided with an ultrasonic transducer; and

an outer tube passing over and holding the ~~substantially completely circular or partially circular cross sectional~~ hemicylindrical shell parts together, wherein ~~a~~ an outer surface of at least one of the ~~substantially completely or partially circular~~ hemicylindrical shell parts is provided with a longitudinal groove for insertion of the surgical instrument,

the pair of ~~substantially completely circular or partially circular cross sectional~~ hemicylindrical shell parts capable of being removed from the outer tube and disengaged from each other ~~for sterilization/disinfecting purposes,~~

wherein the surgical instrument ~~is formed by~~ comprises a needle for the introduction of a substance or for the extraction of tissue samples, and

wherein the longitudinal groove ~~in the surface of one of the completely or partially circular parts~~ is shaped such that the needle ~~extends immediately below and parallel to the outer tube, and the longitudinal groove extends at least long enough along the length of the completely or partially circular part so that during use, a first end of the longitudinal groove is outside of the human body and a second end of the longitudinal groove is inside the human body so that the~~ surgical instrument can be inserted from the outside of the human body into the human body via the longitudinal groove.

Claims 10-12 previously canceled.